



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

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Statement of U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Chairman of the Committee on Finance
WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong
Wednesday, December 14, 2005

Before we start today's hearing, I want to comment on the WTO negotiations in Hong Kong. I'm disappointed that talks seem to be focusing on side issues such as the U.S. cotton program, duty-free quota free proposals, and aid packages. None of these proposals will lead to long-term development which is what the Doha round fundamentally is about. We need to see vision and ambition in the round, not sideshows.

Let's be clear, the United States is the country of ambition - we are prepared to deal within a comprehensive agreement with all of these issues and more. This is a lot more than I can say about some of our trading partners who don't seem interested in market liberalization at all. Instead they insist on perpetuating side-shows, drawing unconditional and unrealistic lines in the sand, or simply sitting out negotiations all together. It's time for our trading partners to get serious, step up to the plate, and show some leadership. Otherwise, the Doha round will remain stalled.